(b) whether Government have received any complaints from foreign markets about the quality of our leather products;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether Government are planning to modernise the leather industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Since the leather industry is primarily in the small and tiny sector and cattered all over the country, reliable statistics of its domestic productions are not available. The working Group on 'Leather and Leather Goods Industries' for the 8th Five Year Plan had estimated the value of output of Leather & Leather Products in 1990-91 to be of the order of Rs. 4740 crores and had assessed the number of people employed in the sector to be 1.4 million.

(b) No such complaints have been received in the recent past.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) A National Leather Development Programme (NLDP) with UNDP assistance is currently being implemented for integrated development of the Leather Industry. The programme includes modernization of the industry.

Dunkel Draft Agreement on Agricultural Sector

1415. SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY:
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI G. G. SWELL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Dunkel Draft Agreement, if finalised, would adversely affect our agricultural sector;

(b) the areas of our agricultural sector which are likely to be adversely affected;

(c) whether it is a fact that seeds, plants and genes are proposed to be patented including the process and product, if so, which are the agricultural products plants and genes which would come under Patent Laws;

(d) what are the counter proposals suggested by India in Dunkel Draft to avert adverse effects on our agricultural sector; and

(e) what is the final perception in the eventuality of failure of deadlock to amend the Dunkel Draft proposals with regard to seeds, plants and genes patents for products and process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (e) Analysis made by the government shows that the Dunkel proposals on agriculture would create no problems for our agricultural policies in the short and medium terms, India does not have to undertake any reduction commitments regarding domestic support to agriculture or concerning the public distribution system. Countries with balance-of-payments problems are also not required to provide minimum market access. India is seeking additional flexibility on domestic support and minimum market access provisions to ensure that there are no adverse effects in the long term also.

The Dunkel proposals on TRIPs require that 'members shall provide for the protection of plant varieties either by patents or by an effective sui-generis system or by any combination thereof. Thus an option has been given to countries to provide protection to IPRs in the field either through patenting or through an effective sui-generis systems. It has not been spelt out as to which particular plant varieties should be protected. Discussions with principal trading partners lead us to believe that the farmer's

right and privilege to use part of his crop as seed for his next crop will not be cultivated in any manner by the "effective sui-generis system for IPR protection". Government have also proposed amendments to the text on TRIPs to ensure explicity that the effectiveness of a sui-generis system for the protection of plant varieties will not stand in the way of farmer's privilage.

While the Dunkel proposals allow for the exclusion of plants and animals from patentability, micro-organisms are required to be made patentable. India is seeking a dilution of the provision concerning patentability of micro-organisms.

Government have not yet taken a final view on the Dunkel proposals as these are still being negotiated.

Stainless Steel Exporters Facing Cash Crunch

1416. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that exporters of stainless steel products are facing cash crunch due to delay in payment of their dues under the International Price Reimbursement Scheme; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) IPRS payments are inteded to compensate the exporters for the higher price of domestic steel compared to the international price of steel. Such payments are financed out of a Cess levied on major steel producers in the country. On account of inadequate receipts through the cess, some delay has occrred in settlement of IPRS claims of the exporters of Engineering Goods including stainless steel products, for exports effected during 1992-93.

(b) Government has recently released a special grant of Rs. 75 crores from Budgetary sources to bridge the gap. Some other possibilities are also being examined to make up the difference in cost of steel for the Exporters.

Relaxation of *Exim* Policy

1417. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Exim Policy and norms have been further eased, and if so, the details of changes introduced in this regard during the last three month; and

(b) what are the reasons leading to further relaxations in the Exim Policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir. During the last three months, Muriate of Potash (MOP), Mono Ammonium Phosphate (MAP) and Sulphate of Potash (SOP) have been removed from the Canalised List of Imports. Gentamycin Sulphate, Cassia and Cinnamon have been deleted from the Negative List of Imports. Norms for 232 more export products have been notified and now there are 2444 standardised norms for grant of licences under Duty Exemption Scheme. Export of Sawn Timber made exclusively out of imported Teak Logs has been permitted subject to fulfilment of certain conditions.

(b) Relaxation in the Exim Policy has been done with a view to making available the items mentioned above at competitive prices in the domestic market as well as to encourage export of value added products.